THE WOODLAND ELF

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"The Spider Sat Looking at Him."

THE WOODLAND ELF

By FLORENCE A. EVANS
Author of "The Jewel Story Book," etc.

Illustrated by CARLL B. WILLIAMS

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THE WOODLAND ELF

MAIDIE AND THE WOODLAND ELF

MAIDIE was lost, there could be no doubt about that; ever since luncheon she had wandered about and the more she tried to find her way, the denser grew the woods with never a sign of the clearing where her father's camp stood. Thinking of it afterwards, she saw plainly enough that the forest was bewitched that day for, though she used all the woodland lore taught her by the guide who was in charge at the camp, how can one find the northern side of the trees when the moss grows with equal luxuriance on all sides? How can one follow the watercourses and so find the river, when each perverse brook persists in flowing in an entirely different direction from any other? And, worst of all, how can one find one's course by the sun, when that orb and the whole heavens become covered with clouds so grey and lowering that it looks more like a November than an August day?

Maidie had been indulging in a fit of the sulks. This was the

cause of her being lost in the first place, all because she did not like what they had had for luncheon and had wanted her mother to open certain cans and boxes of dainty viands which had been brought with them from New York. This, her mother, with an eye to the future, when the guests they had asked to visit them should begin to arrive at the camp, refused to do, asserting that freshly-caught broiled trout, baked potatoes and corn-pone, with other food of a like nature prepared by the guide, if good enough for her husband and herself, were equally so for her little daughter. Therefore Maidie, having in mind a certain tin of plum cake, had merely toyed with the food on her plate and had finally slipped away into the woods to brood over her mother's unkindness.

And now, as has been said, she was lost and most earnestly did she long for the fare which she had scorned at noontime, for she had eaten practically nothing since breakfast and, to add to her discomfort, her feet were sore with walking and her hands and dress were torn by the briars through which she had forced her way while seeking a path back to the camp.

Hour after hour passed by, and at length, to her dismay, she realized that it would soon be growing dark. Without doubt she would have to spend the night alone in the forest and, though she was warmly clad and would not suffer from the cold, and knew that no wild beasts lurked among the trees to harm her, her heart

sank at thought of the hours of darkness which she must pass alone. Just then, however, she came across a clump of blackberry bushes, laden with ripe, juicy fruit, and this she at once gathered and ate, feeling much better for the food although she did not find it very filling.

Presently, in the course of her wandering, she came to a little open place which struck her as being so curious that she paused to look around her. In the centre of the opening was a little mound, carpeted with soft moss and pine-needles, and around the edge was a ring of great evergreen trees, arranged in an almost perfect circle. And, as she looked, Maidie decided to spend the night there, for darkness was already falling and she had by this time given up all hope of finding the camp by herself; she must wait for her friends to come in search of her, and where could she find a more comfortable couch in the forest than the mossy knoll?

So she threw herself down to rest, gazing up wistfully at the great trees which surrounded her and which whispered one to another as though discussing the little stranger who had appeared in that seldom-disturbed solitude. And something in the low, mournful murmur of the wind through the branches so affected Maidie that, though she had not yet cried, she now felt her eyes fill and two great tears were just ready to roll down her cheeks, when a voice beside her said:

"Don't cry; salt water is very bad for vegetation and I do not wish my library spoiled."

Maidie started to a sitting position; she had been positive that she was alone but now, in spite of the gathering darkness, she saw that a tiny, brown-faced man, clothed in leaves and holding a toadstool over his head like an umbrella, stood beside her.

"Who are you, and how did you get here?" she cried, quite delighted to find that she was not alone in the gloomy forest.

"I am a Woodland Elf," replied the little man, with dignity; "and as for getting here, you are the one who has done that for this spot is my home. Oh, you needn't tell me about it; I know the whole history of your being lost and how naughty you were about your lunch."

Maidie hung her head. Needless to say, she was by this time heartily ashamed of her conduct, and it was quite distressing to find that this queer little man knew of it. Without heeding her shamefaced expression, however, he went on:

"But as long as you're here, I suppose you'll have to spend the night for you have wandered far and there's little chance of your being found very soon. Do you like stories?"

"Yes, very much indeed," cried Maidie, brightening up at once. "Why, are you going to tell me some?"

"I'm not going to tell them," replied the Woodland Elf, "but

every night I read from my library and I don't see why your being here should disarrange my usual habits. So, if you care to listen, I will read the tales aloud, instead of to myself. But you must promise not to interrupt."

"I promise," said Maidie. "But where is your library? I don't see any books."

"This is my library," explained the little man, putting his hand upon a bush covered with large leaves, which Maidie had already noticed growing upon the knoll. "The stories are written upon these leaves just as they are upon the leaves in your books. Now remember that you are to be quiet," and, calling to a glow-worm to come and act as lantern, he detached one of the leaves from the bush and began to read though, closely as she looked, the little girl could distinguish no marks upon its glossy surface.

THE CHAMELEON'S COLOR

SO LONG ago that it was before the parents or even the grandparents of you who read this story were born, there lived a chameleon who, except for one thing, was just like any other lizard of that far-away time. And this one thing would have seemed laughable to any one else, but to the chameleon it was a very serious matter; he could not decide what color he wished to be!

Now perhaps you have noticed how prettily most lizards are colored; therefore you may not be surprised to hear that the female members of the chameleon's family, while he was trying to make up his mind what markings to assume (it was just such a case as when a family, newly become rich, tries to decide what coat-of-arms to adopt), were terribly ashamed and hid themselves away as much as they could from the eyes of beasts and men. For while waiting for their leader's decision, they were all of a dingy, dirty, grayish-brown, or brownish-gray, whichever you might care to call it; and the young of other and beautifully colored varieties of lizards had taken to wriggling their tails scornfully and muttering,

"Old clo'es! old clo'es!" whenever they saw a chameleon trying to hide its unattractive self from observation.

At last, when this condition of affairs had lasted for some time and the poor members of the chameleon's family were quite ashamed to leave home, so mortified were they when any one looked at them, a messenger appeared, bearing to the chameleon a letter from the Powers-That-Were. Filled with pride, for no other creature had ever been thus distinguished, the chameleon called on his relatives to assemble in solemn conclave and there before them, his own pulse beating the faster as he did so, opened the precious missive, never doubting that some high honor was to be bestowed upon him.

But, to his intense chagrin, the letter consisted merely of a curt intimation from the Powers-That-Were that they had nearly finished their task of allotting various colors and shapes to the different creatures and that he, the chameleon, must at once decide what color he preferred to be, for, after a week from that day, they intended to work no longer but would leave everything just as it was forevermore.

As the chameleon read this message over again and pondered on it, dismay was succeeded by rage and, quivering with anger to the very tip of his tail, he vowed that he would take precisely as long as he pleased to determine his future color and that, when

his decision was once made, no matter when, the Powers-That-Were must do for him as they had done for all other creatures.

Trembling with fear, his relatives tried to silence him and bring him to reason but do and say what they could, they shortly realized that it was impossible to make him change his mind.

All during the six following days, the chameleon lay on a mossy stone and gazed at the sky. At noontime, it always seemed to him that blue was the fairest of all hues; but when, at sunrise and sunset, the sky flamed with crimson, purple and gold, with sometimes a dash of green, one or all of these colors seemed just as desirable, so that, even had he intended to obey the Powers-That-Were, he was no nearer reaching a decision than he had ever been in his whole life.

Now, as may be easily guessed, this conduct deeply angered the Powers-That-Were, for they wished to finish their work and they could not feel that they had done their duty if one of the creatures were left without a color, even though by his own fault. So they made up their minds that they would themselves decide on his coloring, and that they would at the same time arrange that it should prove a punishment to him forever.

On the evening of the sixth day, while the chameleon was as usual placidly admiring the sunset, there came a sudden, terrible gust of wind and he closed his eyes to prevent their being filled

with dust; and when he opened them again, his family was grouped around the stone on which he lay while in a circle around them he saw the Powers-That-Were, regarding him with every appearance of indignation. This sight so startled and disconcerted the chameleon that he again shut his eyes, but this did not prevent his hearing and a moment later he became aware of the fact that one of the Powers-That-Were was addressing him.

"Lizard, known as the chameleon," said the voice, "how is it that thou refusest to make known to us the color thou wouldst be, so that, our work at an end, we may rest?"

The chameleon was quaking in every limb; but he was no coward and answered stoutly:

"Oh, Powers-That-Were, I have not yet decided which color I would rather be. And, surely, it can make no great difference to you; it will be just as easy for you to change my color at a future time as it is now. In fact, to put the matter plainly, I do not intend to make up my mind for some time to come, for this is an important matter and I must think it over carefully."

There was a low, angry murmur from the Powers-That-Were, and then the same one spoke again:

"Rash creature, thou hast had just as long to decide as any other animal, and behold! with the last of the others we finished these six days ago. Thou alone hast refused to decide for thyself,

so we, even the Powers-That-Were, shall decide for thee. This order we lay upon thee and upon thy family throughout all generations forevermore: the color of any object to which thou shalt approach shalt thou assume and wear while thou remainest near it, and thus shalt thou wear all colors in turn but never any long enough for it to be called thine own."

Again arose the sudden violent wind and when the chameleon looked again, the Powers-That-Were had vanished; but, on happening to glance down at his own body, he found to his dismay that it was as green as the mossy stone on which he lay, while every one of his family had assumed the color of the grass or stone on which he or she chanced to be resting!

And the command of the Powers-That-Were has been obeyed for, to this very day, the color of a chameleon always changes so as to match any object which he is near.

"We had a chameleon that came from Florida and he used to get different colors, but I never knew the reason before," remarked Maidie, as the Woodland Elf handed her the leaf with which he had finished and selected a fresh one.

THE FINEST DRESS IN THE WORLD

ONCE there lived a King who might have been as happy as most of his kind had it not been for the fact that he had married a second time and that his new wife, instead of being a mother to his little daughter (who was the living image of his former consort), was as cruel to her as possible. Even the common people who lived outside of the palace knew how she hated the innocent little Princess and often, in talking the matter over among themselves, wondered that the King did not put a stop to her treatment of his daughter. But they did not know that the second wife was a powerful sorceress who had her husband so completely under her thumb that, though he knew and deplored his little daughter's unhappiness, he dared do nothing to help her. For on the one or two occasions when he had ventured to argue with his wife, she had turned on him, her green eyes glowing with a baleful light which caused his heart to sicken within him, and calmly announced that if he failed to agree with her in any respect she would turn him into a pink-eyed hop-toad. Now the King had, very naturally, no desire to be changed into a pink-

eyed hop-toad, so he at once hastened to assure her that he agreed with her perfectly, for he knew that she was quite powerful enough in magic to carry out her threat.

Perhaps it may be wondered why the Queen, if she disliked the Princess so much, did not make away with her, but any one knowing magic can easily explain the reason: many of the most powerful spells can only be carried out by innocent, pure-minded persons who have no knowledge of the dark art with which they are tampering. So the Queen kept the Princess confined in a dark tower where she was often compelled to work day and night, doing as her cruel taskmistress bade her, though she had no idea why her mixing of particular drugs or repeating over certain rhymes in languages to her unknown, should add to the happiness of that lady. Like all young girls, she longed to be out in the bright sunshine in company with others of her age; but when, with tears in her lovely blue eyes, she begged her stepmother to let her out for a frolic, the latter always replied, mockingly, that she was an idle, good-for-nothing girl and that she should never come forth from the tower until she had caused to be made and presented to her jailer the finest dress in the world. And this always made the poor young Princess weep all the more, for how could she, shut in that gloomy prison, ever procure and present to the Queen the finest dress in the world?

One night the unhappy Princess, after having cooked drugs over the fire until her head ached and chanted spells until her throat was sore, was standing on tiptoe peering through a tiny chink which she had just discovered in the wall of the tower, though as it was a dark night she could see nothing, and wishing that she were small enough to escape through it. And while thus engaged she heard a sudden noise which brought her heart into her throat, for she feared that it was her stepmother returning to chide her for idleness. An instant later, however, she recognized the sound of the clash of arms, one she had often heard when she was a tiny child and free to run about her father's court and come and go when she wished. Whereupon she sighed so deeply that the sound was heard outside of her prison, and she heard a voice ask:

"Who is near me, and what is the cause of that sorrowful sigh?"

The young Princess quite quaked at her own boldness, for the Queen had often warned her never to answer any one who might try to speak with her; but the voice was a pleasant one and inspired her with such confidence that she at once told all about her cruel stepmother and her own imprisonment.

"Is there no way in which you can be released?" asked the unseen stranger.

"Yes," said the Princess, sadly, "my stepmother has often

told me that I will be free when I have presented her with the finest dress in the world. But how can an unhappy prisoner ever find such a dress?" and big tears rolled down her cheeks as she spoke.

"Are you as lovely as your voice?" inquired the person outside of the tower.

The Princess reflected for a moment and then, recollecting that her voice was at present harsh and strained from overuse, she answered, "Quite, I should say."

"Then," went on the strange voice, "I swear that I will seek the wide world over and bring to you the finest dress it contains, if you will promise to marry me when you are free."

The Princess, feeling that in no case could she be worse off than she was at present, at once promised and then listened till she heard the knight (for such, from the sound of his armor, she had made up her mind he must be) ride away; and all became silent once more.

Days, weeks and months passed slowly by and the Princess heard nothing more of the unknown friend who had promised to rescue her, so that, after a time, she was almost ready to believe that she had dreamed the whole episode and, losing all hope, settled down again to her old life of slavish obedience to her stepmother, though she still knew neither the reason for nor meaning of the strange things she was bidden to do.

And what of the stranger who had ridden away in quest of the dress which should free the Princess? He, though he had not thought to mention the fact to her, was really a Prince who had been attracted to the neighborhood of the tower by tales he had heard of the imprisoned Princess; and so favorably had he been impressed by her voice alone that he had at once made up his mind to release and marry her. As he rode along, he reflected that the finest dresses would naturally be found in the largest city of the country, and thither he at once made his way. But so beautiful were all of the dresses shown him, that he was quite unable to determine which was the finest.

While he was in this state of perplexity, he one day went out for a ride through the woods, hoping that the exercise and fresh air might clear his mind and help him to a decision. So deeply was he absorbed in thought that, when his horse suddenly halted, he was quite startled and looked about for the cause of the delay, which he soon found was nothing more than a large spider web, spun directly across the road and in the middle of which the spider herself sat looking at him.

Now the Prince had been carefully brought up by his parents and taught never to wilfully harm any living creature, so he was just turning his horse's head, meaning to seek another road, when the insect spoke to him.

"What is the matter, Prince?" she asked. "You seem sad."

"I am sad," replied the Prince and then, before he had stopped to think of how foolish it was for him to tell his affairs to a spider, he related the whole story of how he came to be in search of the finest dress in the world, and now could not make up his mind which it was.

"It just happens," said the spider, when he finished speaking, nodding her head at him until the whole web shook, "that you have come to the right person; and, as you were considerate enough not to break my web, I will help you. My sisters and I are the finest spinners of lace in the world, and we will make you a dress which will cause her wicked stepmother to let your Princess out of the tower."

"How long will it take?" asked the Prince, anxiously.

"Three months, to a day," answered the spider. "Be here three months from now at the same hour, and the dress will be ready for you. Now I must go and start it at once," and she vanished into the trees by the roadside.

As the Prince was still unable to make up his mind to choose any of the lovely gowns which were shown him in the city, he thought that it would do no harm to wait and see what the spiders could accomplish. So three months later, he was again on the

forest road and there, sure enough, sat the spider awaiting him in the middle of her web. Between her two front legs she held what looked like a hazel nut, but, to his disappointment, he saw no sign of the dress which she had promised him. Before he could speak, however, she held out the nut to him.

"The dress is packed in this for safekeeping," she said; "open it when you come before the stepmother of your Princess, but not before. And now another thing — I am not sure that the wicked Queen means to keep her promise about releasing the Princess, so I have woven a drop of venom into the dress. If the promise is kept, well and good, the poison will not work; but if the Princess is still kept a prisoner, the venom will become active and the wicked Queen will die a miserable death."

The Prince thanked the spider most heartily and then, putting the nut into his pocket, rode away with all speed to the court of the Princess's father, where he announced that he had brought the finest dress in the world and wished to marry the Princess.

The Queen at once asked to see the gown, so he cracked the nut and drew forth the garment which was the finest, most silvery lace imaginable; and she immediately withdrew to put it on.

A few minutes later she returned, arrayed in the exquisite robe, which fitted her to perfection; and then the King, who during the interval had been hearing the Prince's story, begged that

she would at once release his daughter. But a mocking light came into the Queen's green eyes.

"Do you suppose," asked she, "that I really meant to give up the Princess? I find her far too useful and mean to keep her."

Hardly had these words passed her lips when a dreadful change came over her face; her limbs writhed and withered, her hair shrivelled up and vanished, and, a moment later, a discolored, lifeless object, she fell at the feet of the horrified King and Prince.

Of course the King could not grieve very much over the death of such a woman, even though she had been his wife, and he had her buried as soon as possible. And then the Princess, who had been released from the tower, was married to the Prince and, as they loved each other dearly and made their home with the old King, they all lived happily ever after.

"I never liked spiders very much," observed Maidie, "but if they are all like the one in that story, they must be very nice."

"Of course there are good and bad among spiders, just as among other creatures," replied the Elf, who had stopped to sip a drop of dew before going on with his reading.

WHY SNAKES SHED THEIR SKINS

IN THE time which used to be, all the snakes in the world went about, year in and year out, wearing the oldest and dirtiest of skins and never caring whether they fitted or how they looked; for the creeping reptiles were misers and cared for nothing but gloating over and hiding in secret places the treasures which they found in the caverns of the earth.

Now it happened, in that long past time, that the Animal King gave a great party to which he invited all beasts, birds and reptiles. Every other creature, to show his sense of the honor done him, took pains to wear something new, even though it might be only a tuft of feathers grown for the occasion; but the snakes, busy in hiding their secret treasures so that none might find and make away with them during their absence, never thought of such a thing. Even had the idea occurred to them, they would have asked what was the use of providing themselves with new garments while their old ones still held together and might last some time longer.

So when the eventful evening came, the snakes, one and all, appeared upon the festive scene in the same dirty, worn, old skins which they had been wearing for months past.

The Animal King was, of course, very much vexed that the snakes had not cared enough about his party to take the trouble to prepare for it. So he sent the ferrets, which he had employed to keep watch over the other creatures during the evening, to seek out the snakes and bid them come before his throne; and so well did the ferrets ferret out the snakes, which had hidden themselves in various places where they would not be exposed to public view and would not need to exert themselves to talk, that very soon each and every one of the negligent reptiles was before the monarch. Then the Animal King, fixing them with a stern eye, spoke as follows:

"When I was first minded to give a party, more than one of my subjects protested against my asking any snakes, saying that they were low-minded creatures and so neglectful of their personal appearance that their presence would reflect no credit upon themselves or any one else. To this I answered that their minds were no lower than the rest of their bodies, and that, in order to honor the invitation given by their King, they would doubtless don garments other than those generally worn by them. I see, however, that I was mistaken. What have you snakes to say in justification

of the fact that you have dared come this evening in your everyday clothes?"

After a hurried consultation, the snakes appointed one of the largest of their number as spokesman, and he accordingly glided forward, waving his forked tongue in token that he wished to be heard.

"We crave your pardon, King," said he, "but the question of what clothes to wear never occurred to us. As a matter of fact, we have been so busy these last few days, that it was not until this very evening that we made sure of being able to come; and I may add that we would infinitely rather have stayed away, had we not felt sure that our doing so would anger you. For my own part, I do not see what fault you can find with our attire; to be sure, our skins are a trifle dingy, but they cover us and, after all, what more can a creature want?"

"It would have been very little trouble for you to wear fresh, clean skins," said the Animal King.

"I know," replied the snake; "but as long as ours held together, what would have been the use of bothering about it just for a party?"

At this, the anger of the Animal King burst all bounds and, stamping his foot until his subjects, one and all, cowered before him, he cried in a terrible voice:

"Hear me, oh, my people! The snakes cared so little about doing honor to the rest of us, that they did not take the trouble to adorn themselves in a fitting manner before mingling with us. I therefore order that, throughout all time, never again shall a snake be invited to the homes of any of us. And furthermore, in order that they may no longer disgrace their King, even though cut off from all communication with him, every able-bodied snake, no matter in what circumstances, shall hereafter change his dirty, worn-out skin for a new one at least once a year. Now leave me, snakes, and never dare come before me again."

With heads bowed to the dust by this public reprimand the snakes departed, and have never since dared attend any party given by the Animal King or his subjects. But they remember the order about appearing in a fresh skin and, at least once a year, to this very day, all snakes shed their old skins and are to be seen in bright, new attire.

"I hope," said the Woodland Elf, eying Maidie with disfavor, "that you are generally cleaner than you are now."

"Yes, indeed," replied the little girl, trying not to show that her feelings were hurt; "I was clean, quite clean, when I left the camp, but I got dirty coming through the woods."

"I'm glad to hear it, I'm sure," said the Elf, in a relieved tone, as he turned to the bush again.

WHY INDIAN PIPES GROW

ALL these forests were once inhabited by a host of tiny, tricksy creatures who had lived among the undergrowth since time immemorial; and at first they were acknowledged as monarchs by the four-footed creatures and birds which were their only neighbors.

But at length something happened which threatened to put an end to the peace of the Small Ones (as the little people, for want of a better name, called themselves), for the entire territory which had for so long been their undisturbed possession was all at once overrun by the Red Men, whom we now call Indians. And these latter, paying no heed to the fact that the country might have first inhabitants, tramped carelessly through the woods, obliterating at one stride cities which it had taken the Small Ones months and years of labor to build. Nor was this all, the very variety of toadstools which the Small Ones had, since time out of mind, used as shelters under which to sleep during the warm summer nights, were discovered by the Red Men to be good to eat, and were ruthlessly uprooted and borne away for food whenever

seen; so that the poor Small Ones were often, during a summer shower, hard put to it to find a suitable shelter.

Affairs went on thus for some time; the unfortunate Small Ones becoming more and more incensed by every action of the Red Men who, for their part, were quite unaware that their tiny neighbors were in existence, still less that certain of their actions were, to put it mildly, inconveniencing the little creatures. And at length the Small Ones met to discuss the matter; and at this meeting it was decided that they should use every means in their power to annoy the Red Men, who might thus be driven from the forest which would then be left to the undisputed possession of the said Small Ones.

So the little people watched to see which paths the Red Men used in going from hut to hut or from one spring to another, and arranged thorns to stick into their feet and briars to catch at them as they passed; but the worst of it was that the Red Men, their skins toughened by years of exposure to wind and weather, seemed not to notice these annoyances in the slightest degree! Finding their efforts in this direction of no avail, the Small Ones next called upon the mosquitoes which were to be found in the forest to fall upon the intruders and sting them so soundly that they should be more than willing to leave the region; but the mosquitoes, after duly repairing to the camp of the Red Men on their blood-

thirsty mission, returned in the most dejected condition, stating that the warriors around their camp fire were smoking their peace-pipes, and raising such a cloud of smoke that the delicate constitutions of the insects had been unable to stand it, and they had withdrawn in great disorder.

The Small Ones, chagrined by the failure of two of their plans, were almost in despair what to try next; but, after deep thought, one of their number suggested that a chorus of frogs might be prevailed upon to make the vicinity of the camp so noisy that the Red Men would be compelled to move, and that they might thus, by persistent following up, be finally driven from the country. So the very next night a vast number of frogs, at the solicitation of the Small Ones, took up their situation near the Red Men's camp and bellowed and croaked in a manner that was well-nigh deafening, so that the Small Ones, listening from a distance, said joyfully one to another that the intruders would never be able to stand it but would be compelled to move away.

But alas! for their hopes. Just as the noise was at its height, a number of the Red Men's children sallied forth and took captive many of the frogs which they forthwith proceeded to make into a savory stew; and, after that, the frogs declined, positively and firmly, to have anything further to do with the plans of the Small Ones.

And while the Small Ones were doing their best to think up some other plan, a thing happened which quite changed their feelings toward the Red Men. Just how it occurred none was ever after able to tell, but one day the lovely daughter of that one of the Small Ones who was their acknowledged leader, fell into a spring and would most assuredly have drowned (for these little people cannot swim) had not a Red Man chanced along and, seeing what he took to be an insect struggling in the water, assisted her to the bank, where his astonishment at discovering what manner of creature she was may be imagined. And the dripping Small One, half drowned as she was, after expressing her thanks for his timely aid, thought it a favorable opportunity to call his attention the grievances of her people, which she did so touchingly that the Red Man promised, on behalf of his race, that they would ever thereafter exercise the greatest care in passing through the forest.

And that is why, to this very day, Indians move so softly, for they are afraid of stepping upon and destroying the habitations of the Small Ones. Furthermore, to keep their large neighbors in mind of this promise, the Small Ones set up, here and there through the woods, where no doubt you have often seen them, little clumps of Indian pipes in token of the peace which has ever since existed between the Red Men and the Small Ones.

"I always thought Indian pipes were pretty, but now that I know the story about them, I shall like them more than ever," said Maidie. "But why don't they grow in winter?"

"Because the Small Ones are all asleep then, and there's no reason for the Red Men to be careful not to step on them," said the Woodland Elf, rubbing some dust from the next leaf before he began to read it.

THE MORNING-GLORY

ONCE there was a little Prince who, had it not been for a single fault, would have been considered by his subjects almost too good to live; but this fault put every one to so much inconvenience that it was felt that the child was quite certain to remain an inhabitant of the world for a long time to come. Never a complaint had his tutors and masters to make of the way in which their royal charge acquitted himself in his studies. Never a criticism was made of his behavior to his father, the King, or to his subjects, but, sad to relate, this young Prince would not get up in the morning when he was called!

Now perhaps it may be thought that this fault was a very trivial one and, indeed, to be found in many others than Princes of the blood royal; but in his case it was particularly obnoxious because, at that court, people were served with their meals in the order of their rank so that, though the King was safe to have his breakfast as early as he pleased, the rest of the court could not have theirs until the inconsiderate little Prince had finished his. The King felt very sorry for his courtiers, but what could he do? The

Prince refused to come to breakfast until he was ready, and there was an end of the matter.

Several elderly members of the court hinted that a good spanking might make the indolent little Prince more mindful of others, but the King exclaimed in horror at such an idea and, fearful of what might be their fate if news of their suggestion should reach the Prince's ears, the courtiers made up their minds to bear their affliction in silence, though several of them were growing quite thin from having to wait so long for their breakfasts and every day the Prince slept longer and longer, until it began to appear that presently he would not get up at all.

Now the explanation of all this was that the naughty little Prince, possessed by a spirit of perversity, was merely lying in bed mornings because he knew every one was anxious for him to get up, and it amused him to think of the serious, elderly courtiers fuming and watching the door for him to appear. As for the Prince himself, he was not troubled by any pangs of hunger. Far from it; for he had taken the precaution to lay in a plentiful supply of sweetmeats in his own room, and these he secretly renewed from time to time so that, had he taken a fancy to do so, he might have stayed away from his meals for weeks together without suffering in the least. The courtiers could not understand it; they recollected that, in childhood, their appetites had always been ravenous and

that no calamity would have appeared greater to them than having to miss a single meal. Yet here was this lusty young Prince, in perfect health, not only voluntarily delaying his meals but, when he did appear at table, barely nibbling at the food set before him, though the court cooks exerted their utmost skill in trying to please his capricious taste. Most curious of all, the court physician declared that, instead of injuring the Prince's health, abstinence seemed to affect him favorably, for the royal boy was growing taller and stronger every day.

At length, driven by the fear that they might presently be compelled to go quite breakfastless, the courtiers consulted a Wise One who lived not far from the palace; and this Wise One, on hearing their story, had no difficulty at all in informing them of the cause of the Prince's conduct.

"The royal lad," said he, "is undoubtedly subsisting on milk chocolate which he has concealed in his room, and this is the reason he eats so little at his meals. Now I will give you a liquid which, if the prescribed quantity is administered, will cause the Prince to dislike lying in bed and make him willing to get up when other people do."

"How shall we give him this liquid?" asked one of the courtiers, anxiously.

"The best way would be to drop it in a glass of ice cream

soda," replied the Wise One. "But be careful to put in only the quantity mentioned on the label, or else some evil will befall your Prince."

The courtiers paid and thanked the Wise One and then joyfully hurried away with the medicine; and when, near noon, the Prince sauntered down stairs and, merely taking a banana from the breakfast table which had been waiting for him for hours, went out into the courtyard, one of them followed and invited him to go and have a soda, an offer which the lad at once accepted.

The courtier had no difficulty whatever in dropping the medicine into the glass at a moment when the Prince was not looking, but in his agitation, his hand shook and the entire contents of the vial were accidently poured into the soda. But the Prince drank it and seemed to feel no ill effects and the courtier, thinking that the Wise One had given an unnecessary warning, thought nothing more of the overdose.

The next morning, though, there was a great stir in the palace. The servant whose duty it was to call the Prince came running down stairs, wild with fear, to say that his young master's bed was empty save for a flowering vine which lay across the covers and the stem of which was fixed in the ground beneath the open window, though the night before nothing of the sort had been there. Instantly those of the courtiers who had been to con-

sult the Wise One realized what had happened—the Prince had been given an overdose of the medicine and this was the result but naturally they kept very quiet, and the King never found out who was to blame for the disappearance of his son.

As for the courtiers, able now to have their breakfasts when they wished, you may be sure that they did not regret the transformation of the Prince; but they were interested in seeing that the vine into which he had been changed (and which was the kind that is now called the morning-glory) awoke so very early that, by the time other people were getting up, its flowers were closing to go to sleep again.

"I didn't know they had milk chocolate and ice cream soda as long ago as that," said Maidie.

"They must have, or it wouldn't have said so in the story," said the Woodland Elf, calmly. "Now don't criticise, or I won't read to you any more," and the little girl meekly held her peace while he made his next selection from the bush.

THE LAZY POSSUM

THE King of the Animals was once very much vexed over some fancied insults done him by the King of the Birds and, as at that time was the custom, the former monarch called upon all four-footed creatures, wherever they might be and no matter how engaged, to come and help him against the rude sovereign who, for his part, was sending word far and wide for the birds to come to his assistance. Among the animals thus called forth was a possum who, though in those days as brave as brave could be, disturbed in the midst of a delightful nap and feeling his eyelids still weighed down with sleep, was not, as may be supposed, in the best of humors.

Still he knew that he must obey the summons and set out, trying to keep himself awake by gnawing an ear of corn which he found on his way to the meeting place; but when, on his arrival, he found that probably a couple of hours would elapse before the battle could begin, he saw no reason why he should not continue his nap and, lying down on a soft bed of moss which he congratulated himself on finding so opportunely, was soon lost in dreams.

In the meantime, the King of the Animals was hard at work

marshalling his forces and presently, supposing that every one of his subjects was in place, he gave the signal for advance and moved against the King of the Birds, each animal making the noise natural to it, which warlike demonstration so alarmed the latter King and his feathered subjects that they hastily betook themselves to flight.

Delighted by his easy victory, the King of the Animals returned in triumph to the place whence he had started and, seeing on the ground what he took to be a small, round, fur mat of a grayish color, promptly seated himself thereon, announcing that he meant to call the roll of his army and that each animal, when summoned, was to pass before him and would then be at liberty to return to his own home.

Now, as you may have guessed, the round, gray, fur mat was none other than the sleepy possum who had never marched with the army at all, and uncomfortable enough he was, to be sure, both because he knew not what punishment would befall him for his disobedience and because the King of the Animals was fat and very heavy.

So the King of the Animals sat and called the roll, and lions, tigers and all manner of other beasts passed before him as they heard their names. But when he read "O. Possum" (the possum's first name was Oliver but he was seldom called by it), though no

animal appeared, he heard a faint, muffled voice which said, "Here!" for by this time the possum was well-nigh squashed flat and had very little breath left with which to answer.

"O. Possum," called the King again, thinking that the creature had not heard and that his ears had deceived him; and again the muffled voice replied, "Here!" and this time he felt a slight stir beneath him.

Springing to his feet, the King of the Animals looked with astonishment at the beast upon which he had so unceremoniously taken a seat, and would doubtless have apologized for so doing had not a sudden thought occurred to him.

"I marched back from our attack at the head of my forces," said he; "how was it, then, that you were here when I arrived? Weren't you called upon to fight with my army?"

"Yes, sire," replied the possum, who was now sitting up and feeling his ribs to discover if they were still intact.

"How did you get here before I did, then?" persisted the monarch.

"Pardon, your majesty," cried the possum in a trembling voice for, having been discovered, he felt that he might as well make a clean breast of the matter. "I was asleep when your army marched, and thus it was that I did not go with them."

"What!" cried the King, astounded at such daring. "You

wasted your time in sleeping when, for all you knew to the contrary, the presence of one more animal might have been of the greatest importance to me? You shall regret your disobedience. Now every one keep quiet while I think up a fitting punishment for this dastardly possum who has set such a bad example to my army; for if they all went to sleep at the same time, and that happened to be a time when I wanted them to fight, they would not be of the slightest use to me."

So all the animals sat and watched while their King cogitated. Every time he had a thought which he considered a good one, he pulled out a hair from his whiskers, wrote the thought on a piece of paper, and laid it and the hair together at one side; for he did not wish to be forgetful and that was his way of collecting his ideas. But after some time had passed and one side of the monarch's face had become quite bald, while he seemed no nearer a decision than he had been at first, an aged cow came forward.

"Pardon my presumption in daring to interrupt, your majesty," she said, "but I have been considering and it seems to me that the punishment should be made to fit the crime."

"What do you mean?" asked the King of the Animals, curiously; he had run out of thoughts and, anyway, it hurt him when he pulled out hairs from his whiskers, so that he was quite willing to stop.

"I mean," said the cow, "that, as this possum was too ready to go to sleep when others did not want him to, he shall hereafter be compelled to sleep when he doesn't want to himself. For instance, when he is threatened with danger, instead of trying to escape from it, he shall lie down for a nap and thus fall an easy prey to whatever evil is on its way to him."

"The very thing!" cried the King; and, quite pleased that her suggestion had been so favorably received, the cow retired to her own home and spent the rest of the day in chewing her cud in a most artistic manner.

As for the King of the Animals, he took out his Wishing Box and selected a white, pearl button which he laid carefully upon the tip of his tongue. Then, wishing that henceforth the possum should be compelled to sleep at unseasonable times, he swallowed the button and the wish was at once fulfilled. And, from that day to this, instead of trying to escape from danger, the possum always lies down to sleep when he is pursued.

"I've often heard that the possum did that, but I never knew the reason," said Maidie.

"Live and learn," remarked the Elf cheerfully, as he picked out the next story.

HOW THE DARNING-NEEDLE GOT ITS NAME

THE Princess was being driven along the road through the forest as fast as her white ponies could gallop, for the hour at which the ball was to begin had already passed and she had a particular reason of wishing to be present at this entertainment. But, as is always the case when we especially wish to make haste, one thing after another had gone wrong with her dressing until, had it not been for the fact that so doing would have made her pretty eyes red and swollen, she could have sat down and cried from pure vexation. For, first, her long yellow hair was found to be so tangled that it took her woman quite twice as long as usual to arrange it; then two buttons were found to be missing from the sky blue robe which she had set her heart upon wearing; and, most serious of all, one of her little blue and gold slippers was not to be found, until the Princess herself recollected that she had, three nights previous, used it to throw at a bird which had alighted in a tree near her window and persisted in singing when she wished to sleep. Acting upon this hint, the Princess's woman ran down to the garden where, sure enough,

the little slipper was discovered in the damp grass, but so tarnished by exposure to the weather that more precious time was spent in polishing it to match its mate. And, through all these various delays, the Princess was in a perfect tremor of excitement for the ball was given by her Godmother and that lady had promised that she should that evening meet the gallant young Prince whom she was some day to marry. The curiosity of the young lady, and her anxiety to be well dressed and make a good impression may be easily imagined.

So, as has been said, the Princess, on her way at last, was whirling along through the forest. Now and then she stuck her head out of the window to note her progress, and it was with no small satisfaction that she at length heard the strains of music and saw the glow of many lights which showed that she was nearing her destination. A moment later, the coachman checked the spirited ponies, and the Princess, seeing that she had indeed reached her Godmother's palace, made haste to alight.

But alas, for the Princess! In her haste and excitement she did not notice where she stepped, something caught her foot and, lifting the edge of her skirt to see what damage had been done, she found, to her dismay, that one of her lovely, gold-colored stockings had a great, ugly tear right on the instep where it could not fail to show when she danced!

Now the godmother who was giving the ball was a most particular old lady, to whom personal untidiness was more obnoxious than anything else in the world, and the princess knew that if she dared enter the ballroom with a torn stocking, she was almost certain to be sent home for appearing in such a state. So, feeling that she would rather go quietly than have the attention of every one else called to her mishap, she sorrowfully reëntered her carriage and bade the coachman drive her home. And as she drove away, leaving the lights and music behind her, it seemed to the Princess that her heart must surely break at thus missing the festivities to which she had so looked forward and, above all, at not seeing the Prince who was to be her lover. But while she was still on the road through the forest, now and then dropping a tear in her disappointment, a tiny voice asked:

"Why do you weep, fair Princess?"

"Because I have torn one of my stockings and am forced to go home without seeing the Prince I am sometime to marry," answered the Princess, two more tears slipping down her pretty pink cheeks. "I was to meet him at my Godmother's ball, and now I cannot go myself."

"If that is all, I think I can help you," said the little voice, which she now saw came from an insect with a very long and slender body, quite unlike any she had ever seen. "If you have

I Think I Can Help You" Said The Little Voice-".

any silk to match your stocking, I can darn it for you," and it flew into the carriage and alighted on the seat beside her.

"But I have no silk," responded the Princess, rather crossly. "When I started for the ball, I expected no such mishap and so did not bring my workbox with me; otherwise I could have mended it myself."

The insect did not appear to notice her ill-temper. "If you will let me have a single one of your hairs," it said, "I am sure I can repair the damage."

So the Princess, already ashamed of her petulance, pulled out one of her long, golden hairs and gave it to the insect, after which she put her dainty, silk-clad foot on the cushion opposite and the helpful little creature, taking the end of the hair in its mouth began its self-imposed task.

For a long time the insect worked with the utmost patience, creeping in and out of the meshes and bestowing far more care upon the work than the Princess had ever done when she darned her own everyday stockings; and when he had at last finished, she could only acknowledge that the mending could not have been more neatly and carefully done. Even she, who knew where the tear had been, could scarcely distinguish the place, and she was certain that her Godmother would never detect it.

So, after heartily thanking the kind insect, which she had named the "darning-needle," she had her coachman turn the ponies' heads once more toward the scene of the ball.

This time she reached and entered the palace without any mishap, and her Godmother at once introduced her to a handsome dark-eyed Prince with whom she fell in love at first sight, while, for his part, the Prince thought her by far the sweetest and prettiest girl he had ever seen, and at once made up his mind to marry her. And when, long after midnight, the Princess drove home through the forest she felt that, unlucky as she had seemed to be at the beginning of the evening, she had never in her life enjoyed anything as much as her Godmother's ball.

In those happy days it was the regular thing for the course of true love to run smoothly; so the Prince and Princess were married a couple of months later and every one was pleased and said what an excellent match it was. And at their court, darning-needles were more favored than any other creature, for the Princess always remembered how one of their number had enabled her to go to the ball where she met her beloved Prince.

"I dare say," remarked the Woodland Elf, "that you wish you had some creature of the kind to do your mending."

"Yes," sighed Maidie, "I hate mending, but mamma thinks

I ought to know how. I suppose there's no use wishing for such a thing though."

"Not the slightest," returned the Elf briskly, as he cleared his throat preparatory to reading the next story.

THE TOAD WHO HAD A JEWEL IN HIS HEAD

THE toads, kept in a cave the entrance to which was strictly guarded, had always worked for the gnomes and through all the long years of their servitude it had never occurred to any of the patient creatures to complain of their hard lot. So, while the gnomes, their masters, whiled the hours away in all manner of revelry in their underground abode, the toads, with pick and shovel, would be toiling their hardest; nor did they ever, no matter whether a taskmaster was present or not, attempt to hold back a single jewel from those they nightly handed over to increase the hoards of the gnomes.

In the course of time, however, there was born a toad who was totally unlike his long-suffering brethren for, as he grew up, it often occurred to him to wonder why his people should do all the work, and be rewarded only with blows and barely enough food to keep them alive, while the gnomes, who had done nothing to earn them, became the owners of the jewels for which the toads toiled. Sometimes he tried to talk about this to his fellows but, their brains stunted by years of disuse, they merely stared at him

in wonder and did not seem in the least to understand his view of the case.

So time went on and the thoughtful toad, though he still worked with the others, pondered over his unpleasant situation until he made up his mind to escape, whenever the opportunity should present itself, from the gloomy cavern where toads were forced to toil when they would rather rest, and dig treasures for another to enjoy. In the meantime, he began to pay some attention to the jewels which he found (the others handled the gems as though they had been mere common pebbles) and to notice their beauties; and one day, in his excavating, he came across a stone, a great emerald, whose soft, mossy green color so delighted him that he formed the rash project of keeping it from his masters, the gnomes, and secreting it in a place where he could go alone to gloat over its loveliness. This plan, risky as it may seem, he actually carried out; and often after that he took great comfort in visiting his treasure and thinking how he had outwitted the gnomes.

But one day another toad, a small creature of a sneaking disposition, followed him and discovered his secret. And then the spy, thinking to curry favor by so doing, went at once and told the gnomes how they had been cheated out of part of their rightful spoils, and angry enough they were, to be sure!

Fortunately, though, our toad had heard the hops of the intruder as he retreated up the cavern on his shameful errand and, following softly, found that his secret was indeed betrayed to his cruel taskmasters. Knowing that no time was to be lost if he would save his life, to say nothing of his precious jewel, he at once set about his preparations for escape. First he ate a hearty meal, feeling that his stomach was the best receptacle in which to carry food, and then, taking the emerald in his mouth, he entered a crack which ran along the side of the cavern and which neither he nor his fellows had ever explored.

For a time all went well, but presently the crevice grew so narrow that his advance became very slow and painful, while, from sounds behind him, he was convinced that his absence had been discovered and the gnomes, aided by the other toads, were already hot on his trail. For a moment he felt almost like giving up and going back to his former state of slavery, for the crack was by this time so contracted that it pinched his sides uncomfortably; but, seeing light ahead, he struggled on and presently found that the way began to broaden so that his progress became quite easy. And before long he found himself a free toad in the outer world and with not a gnome in sight.

Filled with thanksgiving over his escape, he laid the emerald on some soft moss which it nearly matched in color and refreshed

himself with a long drink from a neighboring rill. But feeling that he might even yet be pursued and recaptured, he soon picked up his jewel again, concealing it as before in his mouth, and hopped gaily along, though he was obliged to seek shady paths and byways for his eyes, accustomed since birth to the semi-darkness of the cavern, smarted terribly in the sunlight.

So much did he wind and twist around in his progress, that he soon felt certain he could never be recaptured by his former masters; and, his mind at rest on this score, he did not pay much attention to where he was going and presently hopped right against the ripe pod of a milkweed plant which promptly burst and filled the air with its winged seeds which set the toad to sneezing violently. And when the paroxysm was over, he found, to his inexpressible horror that the emerald was no longer in his mouth but had been forced upward and lodged back of his nose, where it now greatly impeded his breathing.

Such a state of affairs could not, of course, continue; and the toad asked the first person he met where a good surgeon was to be found, hastening at once to the address given, where the skilful doctor, with the aid of a sharp knife and a pair of forceps, speedily relieved him.

But in that country, all doctors were compelled by law to keep a record of their cases and when, after the death of this physi-

cian, his books were examined, people marvelled greatly over the item: "To removing jewel from toad's head, £ 2." And it was from this that all the stories now told of toads carrying jewels in their heads have their origin.

As for the toad, he retired to a distant country where he sold his emerald and invested the proceeds so well that he lived in comfort all the rest of his life.

"But Shakespeare wrote something about toads having jewels in their heads, and I thought he knew everything," said Maidie. "My teacher at school said that he knew more about human nature than any one else who ever lived."

"Perhaps he did, about human nature," replied the Woodland Elf; "but this concerns toads and I don't believe he ever knew one well enough to ask it the truth of the story," and he handed her the leaf and took another from his library.

WHY THE WILD-CAT HAS NO TAIL

IN THE olden days, all the wild-cats that roamed through the north woods had tails at least eight or ten inches longer than the short, stubby affairs they wear now, and this is the story of how they came to lose their caudal appendages:

At that time, all the woods were full of Fairies, pretty little creatures who were on the best of terms with the wild animals, the only other inhabitants of the forest; for no living thing had ever harmed them in the least, and the human beings of the world had not yet learned to make houses which should keep out the cold of our northern climate, and so lingered in the south where they could depend on the sun to warm them and bring to perfection the fruits on which they lived. So the Fairies and the woodland creatures had the forest all to themselves and very peaceably they lived together, the animals always taking care not to injure the Fairies by stepping on them, and the latter carefully refraining from frequenting the places where the former obtained their food.

But one never-to-be-forgotten day, a big wild-cat crept cautiously through the woods in search of something to eat. Three nights

before, he had as usual gone to sleep in the little cavern which he had selected as his home, but, during the night, a terrific thunderstorm had occurred and one frightful bolt of lightning had struck a tree at the very entrance of the wild-cat's den, throwing the solid trunk directly across the opening and making the creature a prisoner in his own home. And for three days, driven by the pangs of hunger and fear of death, he had scratched and dug and torn at the sides of the cavern until he once more found himself in the open, though with bleeding paws and faint with famine. His first thought had been to visit the little spring near his cave and slake the burning thirst which parched his throat; after which, though with a feeble tread very unlike his usual self-assured gait, he began to search the forest for food.

Presently the persistent calling of a cat-bird, followed by the notes of many other songsters (all of which, he knew, came from the same throat, for the cat-bird is the mocking bird of the north), fell upon his ears; but at first, knowing that cat-birds are thin and not very good eating, he paid but little attention. After a time, though, happening to glance in the direction whence the sounds came, he saw, in a bush beyond the singer, a fine, fat owl who sat blinking in the sunlight, probably wishing with all his heart that it would grow dark enough for him to see.

Now this was just such a sight as the poor, hungry wild-cat

had hoped for, and his big green eyes glared hungrily and his strong, muscular tail lashed his lean sides as he braced his muscles for a spring. Faster and faster went the tail and tenser grew the body till, with a sudden movement, the cat launched himself upon his prey and, almost before the owl was fairly dead, began to crunch its bones. So delicious was the food after his long fast that, when the wild-cat at last paused to wash his face, there was little left on the ground but a few blood-stained feathers; and then, and not until then, he became aware that some one was speaking and turning, found the Fairy King beside him.

"What have you to say for yourself?" demanded the tiny monarch, drawing up his little figure into as dignified an attitude as possible.

"What do you mean?" asked the wild-cat, in surprise. "I have done nothing to offend you."

"Nothing to offend me? Do you call this nothing?" cried the King, pointing behind him; and, to his horror, the wild-cat saw that several Fairies, their wings broken and their garments soiled with blood and dust, were lying on the mossy carpet of the forest. Still, however, he did not see how he was to blame for their condition, until the Fairy King spoke again.

"My daughter," said the monarch, sadly pointing to one tiny creature who was more bedraggled looking than the rest, "had

given orders to a cat-bird to sing to her, and she and her ladies were listening to the music when, without the slightest warning, you appeared in their midst and began lashing your tail about so vigorously that, unable to get out of the way in time, they were caught and struck by it, with the result that you see."

"I'm really very sorry," said the wild-cat, as indeed he was, for he knew that the Fairy King could make things very uncomfortable for him if he chose; "but I was so terribly hungry that I really never noticed what was happening near me," and he proceeded to tell the story of his imprisonment and starvation, ending with the words, "I promise it shall never happen again."

"That it shall not," rejoined the Fairy King, grimly; "I will see to that. As you don't seem able to manage your tail so that it does no harm to others, I intend to deprive you of it. Hereafter, I order, throughout all these woods, no wild-cat shall wear a tail; but, in order that your fault may never be forgotten, the tails which have been forfeited shall be stuck upon rods and placed here and there, that all creatures, seeing them, may remember your thoughtlessness and the trouble which it caused."

The wild-cat begged and protested that this terrible punishment might not fall upon him, and even the injured Princess and her ladies added their entreaties to his; but it was of no avail, the King had spoken and things had to be as he had said. So, even

now, wild-cats do not dare to wear tails; but if you will visit a swampy place late in the summer, you will find the tails that should be theirs, one and all fixed upon slender rods and held aloft to remind all who see them of the wild-cat's fault and how he and his kind were punished for it.

"I don't think it was fair to punish the poor wild-cat when he didn't mean to hurt the Fairies," said Maidie.

"But it hurt them just as much, whether he meant to do it or not," said the Woodland Elf.

"Yes," replied she, feeling that there was unfairness somewhere but not able to make up her mind just where it was. The Elf, however, gave her no time to ponder over the matter, but at once turned over a new leaf and began the next story.

THE BLUE BOTTLE

THERE once lived a Prince and a Princess who were brother and sister and who lived all alone in a great palace with their attendants, for their father and mother were dead. They had everything that heart could wish for and should have been very happy, indeed, had there not been one room in the palace, the study of the old King, their father, during his lifetime, which they had been forbidden to enter until they were grown up. And, as both children were of an intensely curious turn of mind, this made them quite unhappy.

"I don't see what harm it would do if we just looked into the room without touching anything," said the Prince, one day when, as was often the case, they had been discussing the matter.

"Neither do I, and I'm going to do it," announced the Princess, suddenly making up her mind that this state of affairs had continued long enough.

The Prince looked at her, open-mouthed; girl as she was, she generally took the lead in all their doings, but he was not to be outdone and asked, promptly: "When shall we do it?"

The Princess reflected for a moment. "I think," said she,

"that the best time would be when the servants are at dinner. You know they always take a good while to eat, and we will have a splendid chance to see all we want to and lock the room up again before they finish. Not that it's any of their business what we do, but they always nag so, and that is unpleasant."

Her brother agreed with her and at once ran to procure the key to the mysterious chamber which hung, as it had always done, on a nail at the head of the former King's bed, for none of the servants had dared to touch it. The Prince put it in his pocket and returned to his sister, after which the two little conspirators had nothing to do but wait until the gong rang for the servants' dinner which was served about an hour earlier than their own.

They had not long to wait for soon the notes of the gong sounded loudly, and at the welcome summons the servants all hurried down to their own dining-room, leaving the Prince and Princess quite alone in the upper part of the palace. This was just what the two young persons wanted, and it did not take them long to avail themselves of their temporary freedom from observation. Softly, so as to attract no attention, they ran down the corridor leading to the locked room, and a moment later the Prince had turned the key and the door swung open.

To their intense disappointment, they at first saw nothing in the room to have been the cause of so much mystery; the walls

were lined with books, and the only furniture consisted of a couple of easy chairs and a table upon which stood a small bottle of a bright blue color, otherwise the place was quite empty.

"I don't see what they wanted to make such a fuss about this room for," said the Prince, in a disgusted tone; "there's nothing here worth looking at."

But the Princess had run forward and picked up the bottle from the table. "Here is what they didn't want us to see," she cried; and the Prince, hastening forward, saw that both the glass and the contents of the little vial were of the same brilliant blue and that it bore a label whereon was inscribed, "Blue Bottle. For Kings Only."

"Yes," he said, eagerly, "no doubt if we drink that it will make us Kings, and then the servants will always have to do just as we say, instead of our minding them as we have to do about half the time now," and he hastily pulled the cork out and took a swallow.

The taste proved to be not quite as agreeable as he had expected, however, and he quickly put the Blue Bottle back on the table; whereupon the Princess, in her turn, seized it and took a mouthful. But no sooner had the liquid passed their throats than they were both aware of most disagreeable and peculiar sensations in their respective bodies; and a moment later, to their inexpress-

ible horror, the Prince found that he was rapidly growing larger while the frightened Princess began to shrink so fast that she soon feared she would disappear entirely. The unhappy children (if they could still be called children when one was about eleven feet and the other the same number of inches in height) were naturally terribly alarmed and did not know what to do. They dared not touch the Blue Bottle again for fear consequences still more disastrous might follow, and the tiny Princess wept into her diminutive pocket-handkerchief, while the giant Prince shed tears so large that they made great splashes on the floor. And then, as people often do when they have fallen into mischief, they began to blame one another for the misfortune.

"If you hadn't insisted on looking into the room, this would never have happened," complained the Prince.

"You were quite as anxious to look as I was; and anyway, it was you who first drank from the Blue Bottle. I'd never have tried it if you hadn't," replied the Princess, bitterly.

However, all the quarrelling in the world could not help them any and presently they fell silent, wondering how soon the servants would finish their dinner and come and find them, and if there were any way by which it would be possible for them to regain their usual size.

Presently the servants came trooping upstairs, and puzzled

enough were they at first when they failed to find the royal children in their own apartments. But soon the old nurse, who remembered that her charges had often questioned her about the locked room, thought of looking there.

What a to-do there was, to be sure, when the unfortunate Prince and Princess were discovered! Most of the servants were too much overcome to do anything but sit down and weep over the condition of the children, but the old nurse kept her wits about her and, by dint of questioning, soon discovered what had caused the change in them.

"There is only one way for you to regain your normal size," said the good old woman, when she had gathered all the facts of the case. "I shall have to send for the Wiz-ard who distilled the contents of the Blue Bottle and who alone can counteract the effects of the liquid."

Now the Prince and Princess had often heard of this powerful personage whose real name was Whizz-hard (this name had been given him in recognition of the speed with which he sailed through the air from place to place, a power which enabled him to save all the money he would otherwise have had to spend for car-fare; but, as he was English, the h's had been dropped and he was commonly known as the Wiz-ard); so they at once begged the nurse to send for him which she accordingly did, and a few minutes

"They Began To Blame One Another"

later, the gentleman himself came whizzing through the air and landed in the midst of them.

A few words told him what had happened and then, taking a bottle of some very nasty-smelling, green liquid from his pocket, he gave a drink from it to each of the children who, almost at once, found themselves just as they had been before touching the Blue Bottle. They instantly began to thank the Wiz-ard for having helped them, but he soon stopped them and, sending all the servants except the old nurse away, said earnestly:

"You children have run a great risk for if you had swallowed but a little more, the Prince would have grown quite out of sight while the Princess would have shrunk to nothing at all. Even Kings, as you will learn when you are older, are obliged to be very cautious in the use of Blue Bottles; for too much indulgence in this respect will sometimes even make them see things that never happened at all, while another infallible symptom, showing that they have taken an overdose, is that they are apt to dream of over-ripe tomatoes. Now all this, you see, is very dangerous as well as unpleasant; so before I go, you must promise to be good children and never, until you are quite grown up and have to do it in the way of business, must you touch a Blue Bottle again."

Of course the children, awed by the thought of the risk they had run, at once gave the required promise; and, as they are not

yet grown up, they have never touched a Blue Bottle from that day to this.

"But what was in the Blue Bottle, and what did Kings use it for?" cried Maidie, eagerly.

"I never heard of one before I read this story," said the Woodland Elf, peevishly, "so I can't tell you. You're always asking me questions I can't answer," and he seemed so put out that Maidie began to fear that he would not read any more. But he soon recovered his good-humor and went on as though nothing had happened.

THE BOY WHO WANTED THE MOON

FAR back in the happy times when all fairy tales were true, there lived a young couple in a pretty little house on the edge of a wood who, but for the fact that they had no child, would have been as happy as the day is long.

Having nothing to do but look after her house, which was so small and so conveniently arranged that it did not take long to put it in order, the wife had plenty of time to herself and often, while her husband was away at work and after she had finished her sweeping or dusting, she would take long walks through the woods, gathering herbs and flowers and conversing with the birds and beasts which she met, for in those days all creatures knew how to use their tongues quite as well as human beings.

One day as she was following the course of a little brook, now and then humming a tuneful air to herself and thinking how prettily the sunlight fell through the leaves of the trees, she suddenly heard a pitiful crying and, looking about to see whence the sound came, discovered a small black beetle clinging to a fragment of

driftwood in the very centre of the stream and in great danger of drowning.

To rescue the unfortunate insect and place it carefully on the greensward where a ray of sunlight could fall upon and dry it, was the work of an instant, and then the wife was turning away to continue her stroll when the beetle called to her to wait a minute for it had something to say to her.

"I am not what I seem," said the insect, as soon as its breath came easily enough to allow it to talk. "I am really a Fairy named Desirina but, for convenience and to avoid being stared at while travelling, I changed myself into this form. In crossing the brook, however, I had a cramp in one of my wings and fell into the water where I would undoubtedly have drowned (for Fairies can die when in any shape but their own) had you not come to my assistance. As a reward, I promise that you shall have a son who will be the handsomest lad in the whole country; and I agree to grant him any wish he may ever express, provided he asks for nothing unreasonable. Let him be careful, however, for if he is not satisfied with this but asks me for anything beyond my power to bestow, some dreadful evil will befall him."

The young woman thanked the Fairy most gratefully and went on with her walk. That night, when her husband returned from work, she told him of her adventure, and then, in the press

of other matters and interests, they forgot all about it for the time.

But two years later, what the Fairy had foretold came true. They became the parents of a fine, healthy boy baby who was the admiration of all beholders. And as the child grew in years, so did he grow in beauty, strength and intelligence until, as the Fairy had said should be the case, his like was not to be found in the whole country. From the very first, it was evident that he was under some superhuman protection, for he never had the slightest ache or pain and even when he cut his pearly little teeth, they came through as though by magic, never giving him the slightest trouble.

But, from the time he was first able to express himself in speech, this handsome lad had one fault which, had it not been for the Fairy's promise, would have made his parents very unhappy indeed; he wanted nearly everything he saw, as well as a great many things he had never seen, but had only heard of as desirable possessions. Then, too, when he grew older and went to school, he found it much easier to wait until it was his turn to recite and then make a wish which would bring the desired knowledge to his mind, than to sit down and study beforehand. Then, when it came examination time, he had only, when his paper was handed to him, to wish that he knew the answers to the questions, and his brain was at once teeming with the requisite information which he had only to write down, after which he would hand in a perfect paper

while the other poor lads, who really had studied, were chewing their pencils or blankly staring at the blackboards, their minds a gloomy void. And so it was in all manner of sports; he had only to make a wish and he could far excel any of his fellows. Indeed had it not been for the fact that he had once made a wish that everybody should like him, it is to be feared that he would have been far from popular among his mates.

As may be imagined, the good Fairy Desirina was kept very busy and the lad, finding that he had only to wish for a thing and it was at once within his reach, grew more and more extravagant in his demands, wishing for a canoe which would paddle itself, a machine with which he could fly through the air and other things of a like nature till at length his mother, growing alarmed, told him the story of her meeting with the Fairy and of the peril threatening him should he desire anything unreasonable.

Now the boy, though he had always made use of his power of wishing, had never known whence he derived it and, for a time, his mother's tale made him more careful. But after a while, remembering several wishes which he himself had thought it quite impossible could come true, he once more grew careless and began wishing for things right and left as he had done all his life.

One unfortunate evening, he and his mother and father sat by the front door of their home, watching the moon, which was

full that night, rising above the trees, and as they sat there a foolish and thoughtless longing came into the lad's mind, and no sooner had he thought it than he gave it utterance.

"I wish," said he, "that I owned the moon."

As these words left his lips, he was seized by a great black hand which bore him away in mid-air, and the affrighted parents, though they sought the wide world over, never saw or heard of their unhappy son again.

"What did the big black hand belong to?" asked Maidie.

"The Genie who helped the Fairy fulfill the boy's wishes; and he was so tired by all the things he had been forced to do that he was only too glad, when the chance was given him, to make away with the lad," replied the Elf.

WHY SEALS WEAR FURS

IN THE long ago, before man had taken it upon himself to trouble or destroy the animal inhabitants of the world, all seals were soft-skinned creatures, hairless save for their bristling whiskers, who lived in the warmest portions of this globe. Of course in that climate they did not need warm coverings such as they wear at present, and in their delightful tropical home they were very happy indeed and enjoyed life to the utmost, dropping into the water for a swim whenever they felt like it, but spending the greater part of their time basking in the rays of the sun.

Now this was all very well as long as they were used to nothing else, and they might have been content to live in their warm home forevermore, had it not chanced at last that one lady seal, who was ambitious of being a social leader of her people, took it into her head to do something that none of her kind had ever done before — she sent one of her daughters away to the north to be educated.

For quite a while, the unhappy exile suffered much from the cold, until some benevolent animal, disturbed by her constant shiver-

ing and the chattering of her teeth, kindly presented her with a fine skin which had at some former time belonged to a fur-bearing animal. The young seal had this cut down by a skilful maker of fur garments until it fitted her like a second skin and, thus attired, she took the greatest pleasure in joining the other creatures of that region in their favorite sport, which consisted of sitting on a cake of ice, in the midst of some bitterly cold expanse of water, and gazing intently at nothing in particular. She also became quite expert in catching fish, and made friends with the great white bears who were shunned by most of the other animals; and it was with real regret that, when a messenger from her mother bidding her at once return home arrived, she turned her back upon the place where she had spent so many happy months and swam to her southern home.

And when she regained her birthplace, she was even more dissatisfied than she had expected to be. To begin with, it seemed to her, so long accustomed to the crisp, frosty air of the north, insufferably warm, and there were no refreshing cakes of ice upon which to recline at ease; the fish of the tropical seas seemed insipid in comparison with those whose delicate flavor she fondly recalled, and as for the furless seals, after the beautiful, fur-clad creatures she had left in the north, they appeared to her too ugly for words. Moreover, to add to her unhappiness, her mother, a careful and

economical soul, in spite of her social aspirations, had at once upon her arrival taken away her beautiful fur coat and packed it in rock salt to keep it from sea-moths, and the poor seal, unused for so long to the heat of the sun, was frightfully sunburnt and even frequent applications of cool green seaweed bandages afforded her little relief.

Any one of these discomforts the young seal might have stood, but all of them together were more than she could bear and, calling her friends and relatives together, she told her woes and announced her intention of returning to the north where she had been so happy. And now another complication arose. This seal was remarkably handsome as seals go, in spite of her sunburn, and the gallant gentlemen seals vowed and declared, one and all, that she was too fair to be lost to their tribe and that if she went into exile, they intended to accompany her. And as she kept to her determination and the other female seals could not remain behind without their men-folk, a few days later the entire tribe set out for the region of ice and snow which, as this was some time before the invention of boats and steam-cars, they reached in safety.

Skins to protect the newcomers from the cold were soon provided by the other animals of the country, and it was not long before all of the seals were as much infatuated with the place as had been the one who was the cause of their removal to it. And

so delightful did they find the climate and so comfortable their furs that they soon ceased to think of their former home and never spoke of going back to it, and that is why to this day seals live amid ice and snow and are always covered with fur.

"Have you ever seen a moose?" asked the Woodland Elf, as he plucked another leaf from the bush and turned the glow-worm so that it did not shine quite so much in his eyes.

"Only in the menagerie," replied Maidie. "They were like deer, only ever so much bigger and uglier, and they have awfully big horns."

"Yes," said the Woodland Elf, "and this story is about how they got their horns and why they have to wear them."

THE MOOSE'S HORNS

IN THE olden time the moose that lived in this region had no horns at all but looked just as the female moose look today. And the reason why the bull moose now have to wear the spreading antlers which, to say the least, must sometimes be very heavy and inconvenient, is this:

At that time, instead of the animals all living more or less in the same forest, as they do now, it was considered the proper thing for each variety of creature to have a whole forest to itself and, what is more, it was an unwritten law that only the rightful owners of each particular woods were to enter its shady depths, a rule which was, for the most part, very strictly followed.

But one day the court of the Fairy King who ruled in the birch woods was thrown into the greatest disorder. The Princess of the Birches, the lovely only daughter of this ruler, had been taken violently ill and, though many physicians came and examined her, none could tell what was the cause of her trouble.

The King, filled with anxiety, offered the hand of the Princess and half of his birch trees to any one who could alleviate her suffering; but though many, both doctors and wise men, as well as

Princes from foreign parts, flocked thither and tried their skill, their efforts were all without avail and, one by one, they went away again, leaving the Princess still wringing her slender, white hands and murmuring over and over, "If I only had some! If I only had some!" which was the sole thing she had said since the beginning of her illness.

The poor King was in despair when, one after another, those who had been so confident that they could relieve the Princess departed, leaving her in the same condition. And, fearing that his offer had not been widely enough circulated, he told it to the brook which flowed through his domains. This brook murmured it to a larger stream which, in turn, carried it to a mighty river; and finally the news reached the ocean where the waves picked it up and repeated it, one to another, until they were tired. But, though many Princes living in the ocean were now aware of the Princess of the Birches' illness, none of them volunteered to go to her assistance, for any attempt on their part to leave salt water for fresh would only result in injury to themselves, so they knew it was hopeless for them to try to help the lady.

But the river had repeated the news more to the purpose. On an islet in its centre there lived a Fairy who for years had done nothing but sleep and, at the same time, answer the questions which people came from miles around to ask him. These questions he

answered without taking the trouble to wake up and so, as may be imagined, he spoke quite at random and without in the least realizing what was said to him or what he said in reply; therefore he very justly enjoyed the reputation of great wisdom, for what people cannot understand themselves, they consider must be very learned indeed.

Now there were twenty Princes living on the shore of the river just opposite the islet. They were all brothers and, as their father's kingdom was but a small one, they began to think that it would be a good thing for one of their number to win the hand of the Princess of the Birches and the woods that went with it, thereby leaving their father's domain to be divided among the other nineteen.

So they took a canoe (how they all managed to squeeze into one canoe is a mystery, but they did it; you may ask any of them yourself if you doubt the fact) and paddled rapidly over to the islet where the Sleeping Fairy lived. At first the slumberer was disinclined to answer them, whereupon two of the Princes grasped him by the ankles and soused him up and down in the cool water of the river until, for fear of being completely waked up, he began to speak.

"The Princess of the Birches," he said, sleepily, in answer to their queries, "has fallen sick with longing for some of the fir

trees which, while passing by, she saw in the forest of the moose. Her birches, as you know, are quite bare of leaves during the winter and she wants some trees that will retain their foliage throughout the cold season."

Upon hearing this, the nineteen oldest Princes decided very promptly that they did not after all care for the Princess or for the lands that went with her, for, knowing the strict rules governing all creatures of that time, they felt that it would be certain death to enter, much less carry away anything from the woods belonging to the moose. But the twentieth and youngest Prince was not to be so easily discouraged.

"Would it be possible for any one to obtain the trees?" he asked.

"Anything is possible for him who has a pure heart and clean hands," answered the Sleeping Fairy, at which words the youngest Prince at once thrust his hands deep down in his trousers' pockets for he had been playing ball with his brothers just before coming to the islet and the condition of his palms and fingers left much to be desired.

The Sleeping Fairy now began to snore again in token that the audience was over, so, after arranging him on a rock to dry in the sun, the Princes paddled back to their father's palace.

On reaching home, the youngest Prince sat down to make his

plans for the desperate adventure which he had made up his mind to undertake. He was well aware that the enterprise was full of peril; in one part of the river up which he would have to pass there lived a great fish which often made a meal of unwary travelers; and, even if he succeeded in reaching the forest where the fir trees grew, any moose who chanced to see him in the forbidden territory would at once endeavor to put an end to his life.

But what he had heard of the beauty and present forlorn condition of the Princess of the Birches had made a deep impression on him and, remembering what the Sleeping Fairy had said, he washed his hands for the greater part of a whole day, until not a speck was to be seen upon either of them. Then, bidding his family good-bye and putting two pounds of chocolate creams (with which to refresh himself) in one pocket, he set out on his journey.

For a time all went well, and he was paddling briskly along when all at once he saw what he took to be a dark tunnel ahead of him. This he was just about to enter when he suddenly realized what it was, the mouth of the great fish, and he had barely time to back water when the huge jaws closed with a snap, fortunately leaving him on the outside. And before the fish had time to reopen its jaws, the hinges of which were very stiff owing to its living in such a damp place, the Prince was well past the spot and far

up the river where the creature, fearing lest it should be attacked by homesickness, dared not follow.

In due course of time and without meeting with any further adventures, the Prince reached the edge of the woods where the fir trees grew. For some time he paddled cautiously up and down but presently, seeing neither any moose nor any sign of them, he left his canoe and, quietly making his way to where a clump of tiny fir trees grew together, began to uproot several of the smallest specimens. So absorbed was he in this work that he never noticed the snapping of a twig beside him and the first warning he had of the presence of a moose was when the great creature, bellowing with rage, rushed at him with the intention of trampling him to death.

But the Prince, in spite of his peril, kept his wits about him; he was at work on the top of a bank which sloped rapidly to the river and, quicker than thought, he threw himself flat and rolled down the declivity. The moose rushed after him but, being unable to follow him into the water, contented itself with giving the canoe a vicious shove, though such a thing had been far from its intention, thereby greatly helping the Prince, who promptly clambered into the craft as soon as it came within his reach and paddled away. For his purpose had been accomplished; even during his rapid roll down the bank, he had not loosened his grasp on two of the smallest fir trees.

The sun soon dried his clothes and then, carrying the tiny trees which had come near costing him his life, the Prince at once made his way to where the Princess of the Birches lived. And, strange as it may seem, the sight of the little firs and the promise that she might have them for her very own, cured the young lady immediately, and the wedding of the Prince and the Princess was at once celebrated with great rejoicing.

But when the King who owned the birch woods heard how nearly the Prince had lost his life while procuring the fir trees, he made up his mind that no moose should ever again have a chance to steal unobserved upon its victim; so he fastened great horns to the head of each bull moose, the crashing of which as they break their way through the bushes, give warning of the animal's approach and enable all other creatures to escape in time.

"I should think the Prince would have been terribly frightened," said Maidie. "I was chased by a cow once, and they are tame and not nearly as big as the moose, but I was sure she was going to kill me."

"Probably you had been teasing her," said the Woodland Elf, severely; and then he began the next story before the little girl could indignantly deny having done anything of the kind.

THE FINDING OF THE WESTERN ISLES

THERE lived in the olden days a Prince who had searched every part of the known world, trying to find the Princess who was to be his bride. For, when he was only a couple of days old, a wise Witch, who had been invited to visit his parents and foretell his future, had said that he must encounter great dangers, run great risks and travel the whole world over before he found the royal maiden whose hand he was to win. So ever since passing his eighteenth birthday, the young Prince had journeyed far and wide, nor had his doing so been without danger; in the course of his travels, he had encountered and slain dragons and hydras; he had been all but frozen to death while exploring the region near the north pole; he had been caught in a sand storm and had almost perished from thirst in a great southern desert; he had barely escaped from a volcano which had burst into eruption while he was gazing into its crater; and, perhaps the most unpleasant of all his adventures, he had been asked by the parents of the maidens to marry three different Princesses who

had fallen in love with him and, while refusing these flattering offers, he had had great difficulty to avoid giving offence.

But through thick and thin, the Prince clung to the thought of the Princess he was some day to find and marry. How he was to know her when he had found her, he never thought to enquire; doubtless he thought that the old witch who had foretold their meeting would attend to that. But when, as has been said, he had searched every corner of the known world (taking three years to do so, for travel was slow in those days) without any result, he suddenly made up his mind to visit the wise woman, who fortunately was still alive, and ask her what he was to do next.

He had no difficulty in finding her home for she was known far and wide and lived only half a day's journey from his father's palace; so he soon found himself before the little cottage where she dwelt with only twenty-four coal-black cats for company. The Prince knocked at the door and hearing a perfect chorus of mews from within, took this as an invitation to enter and, lifting the latch, accordingly did so. At first he could scarcely see the interior, for the cottage had no windows and was lighted only by a blazing wood fire; but his eyes soon grew accustomed to the obscurity and then he saw that the Witch, seated on the hearth, was busily engaged stewing mice for her twenty-four cats, each of

which, with a napkin around his neck and a plate before him, was watching her culinary operations with the utmost interest.

As the Prince entered, she glanced up for a moment and then said, curtly: "Sit down, and I'll attend to you later. I can't leave these mice or they'll burn, and I don't intend to have my cats' dinner spoiled."

The Prince looked about for something to sit on, but the only stool in the place was occupied by the Witch herself while each of the cats was seated on a little round mat, so finally, with a rueful glance at his new trousers, he sat down on the floor.

He had not long to wait, however, for almost at once the old Witch took her pot from the fire and proceeded to deal out the mice, two to each cat, with a silver spoon. And as soon as her pets were busily engaged with their meal, she turned to the Prince and asked what she could do for him.

The young man at once recalled to her mind the prophecy she had made concerning his future bride and, telling her that he had searched the whole world through without finding the lady, asked what he should do.

"You say that you have looked everywhere," said the old Witch, "have you then visited the Western Isles?"

"No," answered the Prince, eagerly; "I have never heard of them before. Where are they?"

"They lie just in front of the setting sun," she answered, "and to reach them —"

But the Prince, without waiting to hear any more, rushed from the house and mounting his horse, galloped madly away to his father's palace; while the old woman, muttering to herself that he would soon be back, began collecting and washing the dishes of her twenty-four cats who had by this time finished their repast and were now washing their faces in unison.

The King, on hearing what the old Witch had said, at once fitted out a ship and the Prince hopefully set sail for the Western Isles. For the first few days, all went well; but when they had been at sea about a week, the sailors were one morning awakened by the sweetest singing they had ever heard and, rushing on deck, saw a rock directly ahead of them. And on this rock sat a lovely Siren, singing in such ravishing tones that the seamen, with the exception of one old man who was so deaf that, save for the vibration, he could not even tell when there was a clap of thunder, one and all flung themselves in the sea to go to her and were instantly drowned.

The Prince, whose mind was filled with the thought of the lady he was seeking, was not, of course, as susceptible as the others and, anyway, he was so overcome by the loss of his crew that the voice of the Siren no longer sounded sweet to him. Going forward

was now not to be thought of, for no Prince would be guilty of appearing in a strange country attended by only one old man; so he and his deaf retainer sadly put the ship about and returned to their own land, which they reached in a sore state of fatigue for, being so shorthanded, they were obliged to work every minute.

On regaining his father's court, the Prince for a time devoted himself to resting, and while doing so, it suddenly occurred to him that he had not stopped to listen to all that the old Witch was willing to tell him about reaching the Western Isles. So, as soon as he felt equal to the exertion, he once more journeyed to the old woman's cottage.

This time he found her decorating each of her cats with a bow of ribbon and a bunch of catnip, for they had been invited to a party and she was anxious that they should all look their best. She had almost finished her task, however, and as soon as the cats had departed for the scene of the festivity, she turned to her visitor and asked:

"What did you think of the Siren?"

The Prince, overcome with shame at not having before waited to learn what dangers he might encounter on the trip, told her of the loss of all of his brave sailors, the old woman nodding her head the while and seeming not at all surprised by the tale.

"If you had stayed to listen to me," she said, "I should have

told you to put cotton in your men's ears and then they could never have heard the Siren's voice. And now I have another thing to disclose to you: by my magic, I know that your bride is in the Western Isles; but before you find her the Siren must be disposed of, for as long as she stays on her rock and lures men to their death, that country and this can never be united as they should be. The Siren must die, and at your hands; but there is only one thing that can harm her, and that is a rope made of neither wool, hemp nor flax. Now, go! I have told you all that I may — slay the Siren and you will find your bride."

The Prince, after thanking her, quickly returned and told his father what he had learned from the Witch; and the King immediately gave orders that twenty-foot lengths of every known kind of rope should be brought to the palace. These were put on the ship which was once more remanned and, taking plenty of cotton with him, the Prince again set sail for the Western Isles.

So fearful was he that the same misfortune as before might befall him that, when only three days out, he stuffed the ears of all of his men with cotton, lest they should reach the Siren's rock sooner than had been expected. This, of course, made it very hard for them to understand the captain's orders; but they soon learned to talk with their fingers and even with their toes (for it was so warm that the sailors all went barefoot), when their hands were busy.

On the sixth morning, the Prince heard music in the distance and knew that they were nearing the wicked creature whose sole enjoyment lay in luring men to a watery grave; but, owing to his wise precaution, none of the men heard a single note, and, when they had at length anchored beside the rock and the Prince prepared to go ashore, they obediently went below to remain until he should call them on deck again, for he was not minded that they should see him slay the Siren, richly as she deserved her fate.

Meanwhile, she was singing away with all her might and wondering how it was that her voice failed to produce its usual effect. When the Prince stepped ashore with his ropes, she merely laughed for she knew that either wool, hemp or flax had a part in each and every one and that they were powerless to harm her; nay, she even let him try them around her white neck, looking at him the while with a mocking expression in her sea-green eyes. And to his astonishment, the Prince found that, strong as they looked, each rope, on touching the Siren, broke like thread in his hands. This, he felt, would never do and, overcome by a sudden feeling of anger, he seized the long hair of the creature and, before she could divine his intention, knotted it about her throat; and, almost instantly, she fell dead at his feet.

The Prince, after pushing the Siren's body into the sea, where it quickly sank from sight, returned to his ship and once more

steered toward the setting sun; and the very next morning, two beautiful tropical islands lay before them.

After putting on his best clothes, the Prince went ashore where the very first person he met was a lovely Princess who was hastening down to view the strange ship. She, of course, was the Princess for whom he had searched so long and, as she fell in love with him on the spot and as there was no reason for waiting, they were married that very day.

After that time, intercourse between the mainland and the Western Isles was very frequent for the Siren was no longer alive to make the trip a dangerous one; but no one ever knew that it was the Prince who had slain the wicked creature, for he and the Witch and the King kept their own counsel.

"I don't see how any one as wicked as the Siren could have such a lovely voice," said Maidie.

"But she did," replied the Woodland Elf. "Sirens are all as wicked as possible, yet they have the sweetest voices in the world. I can't explain why it's so, but it is," and he made another selection from his inexhaustible library.

THE WILFUL SNAIL

I'M SURE I don't know what we are to do with that son of ours," said the father snail, sadly; he had just returned from a crawl and seemed rather depressed and out of breath.

"What has he been doing now?" asked his wife, sympathetically; she dearly loved the lad in question, but she recalled, with a shudder, the pace which he had set her the last time they had gone out together.

"Why, as you know," answered the father snail, "he and I started out with the intention of visiting those fresh lettuces which have just appeared above the ground. All went well until we saw some of those low-born, houseless creatures known as slugs on the path ahead of us, and then nothing would do but we must mend our pace and try to catch up with them; for I grieve to say that our son, though from whom he inherited it I do not know, has a decided taste for low company. I did my best to dissuade him and then, finding that of no avail, endeavored to hasten my crawl, hoping that my presence would have a good effect upon their manners and conduct. But I might have spared myself the pains. No

sooner were we within hailing distance than the reckless boy set off at a rate of speed which no self-respecting snail would ever attempt to equal and catching up with the objectionable objects of his pursuit, was soon out of sight in their company. And I, through fatigue and trouble of mind, having lost all desire for the lettuces which had been the motive of our crawl, was left to return alone."

The mother snail's heart sank at this recital, but she did her best to make her weary husband comfortable under the shady cabbage where they made their summer home; and then both parents sat down to the sorrowful task of waiting for their erring son.

Not until long after, when the sun was many hours high, did the wanderer return to his home, and then it was only to announce that he had been invited to a slug party in the lettuce patch that afternoon and that he meant to attend. It was in vain that his parents appealed to his pride and reminded him that slugs, creatures which had no shells, were not fit company for a well-bred snail. Nor did he pay any heed to the fact which they recalled to his mind that, owing to frequent visits to the garden of huge animals known as human beings, it was dangerous to roam at large excepting early in the morning or late in the evening. He had made up his mind to go, and go he would, he said, in spite of all remonstrance.

His father and mother, fearing that opposition would only strengthen his resolution, at last ceased speaking and watched in gloomy silence while their son and heir made himself ready for the festivity. And it was with hearts full of foreboding that they saw him take his departure, for who could tell what evil might befall a young and daring snail found by daylight in the garden of a human being?

And when many hours later the young snail had not returned from the slug party, the unhappy parents felt sure that the worst had happened. Caring neither to eat nor rest, they waited until far into the night and then, able to bear the suspense no longer, the father, accompanied by the fire-fly whom he had engaged to light the way, went himself to the lettuce patch, but found no trace of the missing youth.

That night passed slowly, and the next day, and the poor parents, unable in their anxiety to either sleep or eat, still waited for news of the wanderer. And well toward the close of the second night, their patience was rewarded. Far in the distance, just as the first faint glimmerings of dawn were beginning to show in the east, they heard a sound which reminded them of their son's crawl. With outstretched necks and quivering horns they waited while the noise drew nearer and nearer, and at last through the darkness, faint with hunger and fatigue as he was and different

enough from the jaunty young snail who had set out for the slug party two days before, they recognized their missing child.

To say that they were overjoyed to see him would be putting it too mildly; and the choicest food was at once spread before him while his parents, who had also fasted during his absence, joined him in a hearty meal. And when he was rested and refreshed, they asked the story of his adventures.

"You know only too well," said the young snail, sadly, "how I persisted in going to the slug party in defiance of your wishes, and all the evil which has befallen me from so doing is only the just reward of my disobedience. Just as the merriment at the party was at its height, a terrible crashing was heard among the lettuce. The cowardly slugs at once concealed themselves with almost incredible speed, leaving me alone. An instant later, to my horror, I was seized by a great white hand and borne away. I, of course, at once withdrew into my shell, and, when next I ventured to peep out, I found my view sadly limited for I was shut in a box made of some kind of thick paper. For many hours I roamed up and down this prison; I had no food or water and, between hunger, thirst and fright, was in a dreadful state of mind. Then, you may be sure, I bitterly repented of my wilfulness. As time went on, it became evident that my captor had either forgotten me or else meant to starve me to death and at last, impelled by

hunger, I began to gnaw a corner of the box, hoping that it might stay the pangs of hunger which assailed me.

"But something better than that was to happen. In a very few minutes I found that I had gnawed a hole through the substance of which the box was made and, peeping out, saw the blue sky, upon which I had despaired of ever again looking. After that, of course, I worked with redoubled energy, quite forgetting my hunger in the hope of regaining my liberty. But, even after making an opening large enough to allow of my escape, I found that my troubles were still not at an end, for I was perched upon the sill of a window and far above the ground, so far, indeed, that in looking over I became dizzy, lost my balance and fell. The ground seemed to fly upward and hit me a tremendous crack on the shell, and then I lost consciousness.

"When I came to myself, to my astonishment and delight, I found that I was in the very lettuce patch where the unfortunate slug party had been given. It was very dark, but I have managed to find my way and hastened home as fast as I could crawl. And now I ask your forgiveness for all the trouble and anxiety I must have caused you."

"My dear boy," cried his father, "we will forgive you gladly if you will only promise to have nothing more to do with those disgusting slugs."

"I never will," said the son, feelingly; and he kept his word.

Maidie glanced shamefacedly at the Woodland Elf, wondering if he had selected this story because he knew of her disobedience, but he was busy picking another leaf and never looked in her direction.

THE INQUISITIVE MOON

LONG ago the moon was a round ball, balanced in the sky, where it might always have stayed, just as easily as not, had it not been for the fact that, whenever it saw a person on earth doing anything wrong, it leaned down to look, lost its balance and fell to the ground with a bang which called the attention of the whole world to the guilty one. And then, in order to have light at night, some one would have to put it up in the sky again, which was no easy matter. People were much annoyed by this inquisitiveness of the moon, but what could they do?

One evening a naughty little Princess was eating jam in her mother's preserve closet when the moon, catching sight of her through the window and leaning down for a better view, at once fell into the palace yard and jarred the whole place so that every single glass of preserves was broken; immediately after which the courtiers, searching for the culprit who had been the cause of the fall, discovered the Princess red-handed (literally so, indeed, for she had been helping herself to strawberry jam without using a spoon).

The Princess was terribly mortified, especially as her royal

father announced that, in punishment, she should be allowed to eat no jam on her bread for a whole month, and began casting about in her mind how it could be managed that one could do a thing just a wee bit wrong without the tiresome moon calling every one's attention to it by falling into a place where no one expected, much less wanted it. And at last an idea came to her.

That very night the Princess took pains to keep awake until every one else in the whole palace was wrapped in slumber; and then, taking with her the largest feather pillow from her bed, she crept out into the courtyard of the palace and deliberately began to comb her hair the wrong way! It was just as she had expected; no sooner had she drawn the comb once or twice through her yellow ringlets when, sure enough, the moon slipped from its place and began to fall swiftly to the ground. But the Princess, knowing that this would happen, was not unprepared. As quickly as possible, she darted across the courtyard and arranged the pillow where she expected the moon would fall; and so well had she calculated that the orb landed fairly and squarely upon the downy couch provided for it, and without having made the least noise.

So far, so good; but this was not by any means the end of the Princess's plans. Now that she had possession of the moon, she intended to arrange matters so that that troublesome luminary should no longer be able to call the attention of others to one's

"The Whole Palace was Wrapped in Slumber"

most secret actions. So she hastily locked the moon in the closet where she kept her extra toys and put the key on a gold chain around her own neck, so that she should not lose it, after which she returned to her room but not to sleep. Instead, she lay awake until sunrise, trying to think what she could do that would compel the moon to mind its own affairs.

Before breakfast time her mind was made up and, as soon as she had finished eating, she ordered her pony and galloped away to the court of a neighboring King whose young son was quite as anxious to be revenged on the telltale moon as was the little Princess herself. And the result of the consultation of the two children was that, late that night, when all the grown-ups were on the palace turrets, peering around with spy-glasses and wondering what could have become of the moon, the Prince and the Princess stole up to the latter's playroom and the former, with a small blacksmith's hammer, which was one of his chiefest treasures, hammered the moon out flat until she was as round and thin as a wafer! Then, as they could do no more that night, they locked the moon up again and separated, the Prince making his way unseen back to his father's palace, while the Princess, thoroughly worn out by so much wakefulness, crept into her bed where she fell asleep as soon as her head touched the pillow.

By the next night, the excitement over the disappearance of

the moon had already subsided and, no one being on watch, the Prince and the Princess had no difficulty in carrying the moon outside. Then the Prince procured the longest ladder in the country (which fortunately belonged to the head gardener of the Princess's father) and, climbing to the topmost round, with his hammer and the moon, and some nails which he had carried in his mouth, fastened the moon so securely to the sky that, from that day to this, it has never once fallen to the earth, though it has seen many wrong things done.

Thoroughly satisfied with their exploit, the Prince and the Princess retired to the palaces of their respective fathers; and the next evening they did the very naughtiest things they could think of, just to make sure that the moon was securely nailed. And, as it kept its place, no one discovered them at all, which was quite as it should be.

The fact that the moon was now stationary and no longer able to fall to the earth caused much astonishment among the learned men of that time; and they wrote many learned treatises to explain the reason, never dreaming that the curly-haired Prince and Princess could have enlightened them more about the matter than all their science. And so much pleasanter did people find it to have the moon fixed in its place than to have it always dropping down unexpectedly, that every one was very happy indeed, and

wished that whatever had happened to the luminary had taken place years before.

When years had passed by, the Prince and the Princess grew up and married each other but, in memory of their unhappiness in the days when the moon had called attention to all of their misdeeds, they never had their meals served at the table like other people. Instead, all the food in the palace was locked in closets and the keys thereof carefully concealed by the servants; and whenever either of the august couple was hungry, they would both search high and low until they had found one of these keys, whereupon they would pretend to steal the food which was really their own, for it was such a satisfaction to do something that looked wrong without having the tiresome moon interfere, that the pleasure lasted them all their lives.

Maidie made no comment on this story. To tell the truth, she was wondering what the Prince had rested the ladder on when he nailed the moon in the sky, but she did not like to ask. So the Woodland Elf, after refreshing himself with a single wintergreen berry, which he took out of his pocket, went on with the next tale.

WHY WISHES NO LONGER COME TRUE

ONCE upon a time, in those far off days when Fairies and mortals were good friends and when the latter had not offended the former by pretending to disbelieve in their existence, there lived on a certain island of the Western Sea a King and Queen who were the happy parents of the handsomest little Prince and Princess ever seen. These children were twins and, at the time of which this story tells, they were thirteen years old. The Prince, whose name was Claude, was dark, with black, wavy hair and great, flashing, dark eyes; but his sister Claudia had a skin like pink and white roses, her eyes were blue as the summer sea which always surrounded that happy island, and her hair, the color of pure gold, hung in two great heavy braids which reached to her ankles, so that when she went through the fields and the woods, she had to lift them to prevent them catching on the shrubs and bushes.

In all the island there were no savage beasts or wicked people, for the place was a great favorite with the Fairies and, as they cannot abide persons or creatures who do harm (perhaps that

is why there are so few Fairies nowadays), the "Good Folk" did their best to make both people and animals so happy that they had no temptation to be bad. So the little Prince and Princess roamed, without fear of evil, all over their island home at their own sweet will.

Once when they had gone off to the hills alone for all day, taking their lunch with them, it chanced that they stopped to rest and to quench their thirst at a little crystal spring which welled up among some rocks. Now it happened that the home of the Fairy King was beside this very spring and, being disturbed by the chatter of the two mortal children, he peeped from his hiding place among the stones to see who was there. Of course, he recognized the little Prince and Princess at once, for Fairies know everything, and, as a royal personage is a royal personage in the eyes of a Fairy, even though he or she chances to be a human, the tiny monarch hastily aroused his household and issued forth with all his train to bid the twins welcome to his spring.

Among those who came forth at the bidding of the Fairy King was his own youngest daughter who, marvelous as it may seem, was the exact image in miniature of the lovely human Princess; and when Claude saw this he was so surprised and pleased that, dropping on one knee, he lifted the tiny lady carefully from the ground and gave her a hearty kiss, for it was, of course, an

immense compliment to his sister that any Fairy should care to resemble her.

"Son of a mortal King," said the Fairy monarch, as Claude carefully put the tiny Princess down again, "perhaps it is not known to you, but any human being who kisses a member of the Fairies' royal family is entitled to the granting of a wish. Say, therefore, what you desire to have. And you, too, fair Princess," he bowed to Claudia, "for your beauty and sweetness, may claim a wish."

The royal twins thanked the Fairy King most heartily but, strange as it may seem, they positively, at that moment, could not think of a single thing for which to wish!

"Thanks, most kindly, your majesty," said Claudia, graciously, "but if you will be pleased to give us time to consider the matter, we can be more certain of wishing for those things which we really desire most. May we reserve for a time the privilege of choosing our wishes?"

"Surely, fair Princess," replied the Fairy King, courteously; "you shall have a week and a day in which to make up your minds. At the end of that time, return to this spot and I will grant you each whatever you are pleased to ask for. And now farewell; pray give my compliments to your royal parents, and remember that we are to meet again in a week and a day," and he and his followers disappeared.

Left alone, Claude and Claudia looked at one another. It chanced that this was the first time a Fairy wish had ever been offered to either of them, and they felt that they could not be too careful in deciding the matter. Now that they came to think of it, there were so many things that they wanted, and it was so hard to determine what they wanted most. But when they had left the spring and were well on their way toward home, Claudia had a sudden brilliant idea which solved their difficulties in a moment.

"Claude," she cried, turning to her twin, her pink cheeks growing pinker than ever and her great blue eyes shining with excitement, "I know what—let's each wish that every wish we ever make will come true!"

The Prince caught the excitement in his turn. "How did you ever come to think of such a splendid thing to ask?" cried he. "Oh, what a jolly time we'll have! But do you think the Fairies will grant us such a wish?"

"They've promised and so they'll have to," replied she, merrily: "Oh, goody! I wish, though, that we didn't have to wait a week and a day; it will seem an age."

To the impatient children the time did seem to drag terribly; and when the longed-for day at last came, you may be sure that they were not late for their appointment with the Fairy King,

nor did they require any urging to make them state their wishes, for first Claude and then Claudia said, slowly and distinctly:

"I wish that every wish I ever make will come true!"

The Fairy King was quite overcome with dismay when he heard this request, even the children could see that, but he had given his royal word and there was no help for it, he must do as he had promised. And that is why Fairies no longer grant wishes to mortals, for Claude and Claudia have ever since kept them so busy that they have had time for nothing else. As for the royal twins, they are still living happily on the island in the Western Sea, for one of the first wishes they made was that everything on the island should always stay just as it was, and that the inhabitants of other lands should never be able to find it and disturb their happiness.

"That is just the kind of a wish I always meant to ask for," said Maidie; "that is, if a Fairy ever offered me a wish."

"I don't think it's very likely to happen," replied the Woodland Elf, dryly, as he turned to the next story.

THE RABBIT'S WHITE TAIL

ONE afternoon a disobedient little Fairy ran away and made her way into a swamp where she meant to catch lightning-bugs, though it was not the right season for them and her parents had forbidden her to touch the creatures. She did not find any, however, though she wandered further and further into the marsh until she completely lost her way; and soon she found that her wings had become too damp for her to use them in flight and that, as she went along, snakes and turtles peered at her with menacing expressions, for Fairies who have been naughty are no longer protected by their magic power and any creature which wills may injure them. So soon she sat down and cried as though her heart would break for she was frightened and lonely, her dainty slippers and stockings were quite ruined and her pretty dress splashed by the green ooze and mud of the swamp, and, whichever way she turned, she seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the mire.

Suddenly, just as she had made up her mind that she could go no further and, in spite of the dreadful creatures around her, was sinking down in despair to spend the night where she was,

she was startled by a long-eared, brown animal which sprang before her from one tuft of grass to another with the greatest ease and seemed to know by instinct which was solid ground and which was not.

At first the Fairy was very much alarmed and tried to conceal herself, for the creature was much larger than she was and, as Fairies usually kept much to themselves and had little to do with animals, she was not sure whether it would harm her or not. But reflecting that if she let it leave her, she might not have another chance to escape that night, she called to it, "If you please, could you tell me how to get out of here?"

The animal came jumping back and, though the tiny maiden trembled with nervousness (for it was much larger when close at hand than she had expected), she faced it bravely.

"What is the matter? Are you lost?" asked the creature.

"Yes," said the Fairy, mournfully, "I am lost. I should never have come here; I was told not to, but I disobeyed and now I don't know how to find my way out."

"Perhaps," said the animal, "if you got on my back, I could carry you out of the swamp to solid ground again, for I know the path well."

"Oh, no!" cried the Fairy, hastily. "I am very timid about riding and should be certain to fall off and hurt myself; but if you

will lead the way, I'm sure I can follow you. And please tell me what kind of an animal it is who is showing me such kindness."

"I am a rabbit," said the creature. "Well, I think my plan is the better one, but if you think you can follow me, all right! It's growing dark, though, and I'm afraid you'll get into trouble."

But the Fairy at once asserted that she was sure she could keep him in sight and begged him to start without delay, saying that she had not left word where she was going and knew that her people would be anxious and worried about her.

So the rabbit started, but a few minutes' trial convinced the Fairy that he had not exaggerated the difficulty of her following him. In the growing darkness, the animal looked just the same color as the surrounding swamp; and more than once she quite lost sight of him and strayed into pools of mud and water from which she had great difficulty in disengaging herself. And several times, fearing that her guide had left her, she was obliged to call upon him to return. Still, she was not willing to mount his back as he had suggested and the rabbit, fearing that she might fall into the water and be drowned without his knowledge, was at his wits' end until a sudden bright idea occurred to him.

"Have you anything white," asked he, "that you could tie to my tail? I'm sure that it would show, even in this darkness, and you would have no further trouble about following me."

"Would this shawl do?" asked the Fairy, taking a wrap from her shoulders.

"The very thing!" said the rabbit. "And do not fear that you will catch cold without it, for now I will soon lead you to your home. Please tie it tightly around my tail and then we will be off."

The Fairy did as she was told and found that the presence of the white object on the rabbit's tail made all the difference in the world; for she could see it without the slightest trouble and was now able to follow where he led with comparative safety, so that she soon found herself back at the spot where she had started to enter the swamp.

Here, gathered in a crowd and just about to begin bemoaning her fate, for they had quite made up their minds that they would never see her again, were many of her friends and kinsmen; and, dirty and bedraggled as she was, they at once gathered around the returned Fairy, kissing and congratulating her on her escape. Feeling out of place in all this excitement, the rabbit, thinking himself unobserved, was about to withdraw when the Fairy whom he had rescued called the attention of her friends to the embarrassed animal and told them what he had done for her. And then he, too, came in for a share of their attention, for whoever does a favor to one Fairy earns the gratitude of all others.

Presently the father of the Fairy who had been saved from the swamp climbed upon a toadstool and clapped his hands in token that he wished to be heard; whereupon the others fell silent.

"This rabbit," said he, "has earned our lasting gratitude by rescuing my daughter from a night of peril and fear, and it is only fitting that he should be rewarded for his deed. Tell us, rabbit, any wish that you may have and, if it is within my power, it shall be granted."

The rabbit was so agitated that his nose and whiskers quite quivered and, had it not been covered with fur, it would have been seen that he was blushing. But presently he managed to stammer out that he wished for nothing, and only begged to be allowed to keep the Fairy's shawl in memory of the adventure.

"You may keep the shawl, and welcome," replied the grateful father; "and that all creatures may know of your kindness to one who had no claim upon you, I decree that henceforth you and your kind shall wear white tails," and he passed his hand over the tail of the rabbit which instantly turned white, though the rest of the animal retained its former brownish color.

And to this time, all rabbits of the kind that rescued the Fairy wear white tails in memory of their ancestor's kind deed.

HOW MAIDIE WAS FOUND

FOR some minutes Maidie had been conscious that the Woodland Elf's voice was growing fainter so that, at the last, she had had great difficulty in hearing, while at the same time she had been dazzled by a strange light which seemed to flood the place. And now, turning to discover the reason for this state of affairs, she found that the Elf had vanished!

Rubbing her eyes to make sure of this fact, she looked again and, to her astonishment, found that her father and the guide, each carrying a lantern, were standing before her.

Her father at once caught her in his arms and gave her a good hug, after which he made a motion to return immediately to the camp to relieve the fears of the little girl's mother who had been almost distracted since the absence of her small daughter had been discovered. But Maidie insisted on first gathering up the eighteen leaves from which the Woodland Elf had read the stories to which she had been listening, and on carrying them with her though, when she came to look at them the next morning, she found that they were dry and withered and quite ordinary looking.

On reaching the camp, Maidie was warmed at the fire and

fed with a delicious supper which had been saved for her, quite as though she were not a naughty little girl who had wandered away in a fit of the sulks and put them all to much trouble and anxiety; for her parents had decided that the loneliness and fright of being lost were probably enough punishment for her and before long, overcome by the excitement and fatigue of her experience, she grew drowsy and was led away to her own little bed by her mother.

Maidie never again strayed away alone into the forest, though accompanied by the guide, to whom she had confided the whole story of her adventures on the occasion of her being lost, she often vainly sought the spot where she had passed that evening and listened to the tales from the library of the Woodland Elf.

THE END.

JUVENILES

BY JEAN K. BAIRD

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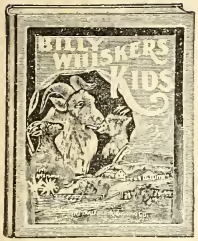

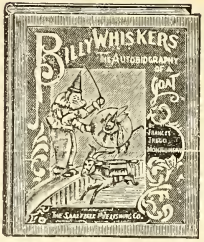

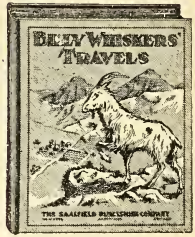

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"Everything goes well enough with Billy until a circus comes to town, and then just like the small boy, he made up his mind to go, come what might and cost what it would. He made preparations for a week and went, there to meet with all manner of adventures, becoming so infatuated with the life that he joined it."—*Des Moines Capital.*

BILLY WHISKERS AT THE FAIR

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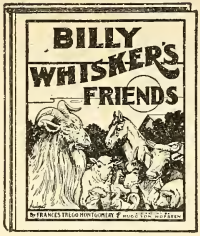

By Frances Trego Montgomery

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